

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-14 ACDA-10
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O R 151720Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7760
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 6046

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, IS, US
SUBJECT: KNESSET DEBATE ON SECRETARY'S VISIT

SUMMARY: THE KNESSET TODAY MET IN SPECIAL SESSION AND,
IN A DULL MEETING, DISCUSSED "THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN
POLICY IN THE LIGHT OF THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE'S
RECENT VISIT." FOLLOWING A MOTION OF CRITICISM BY
FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER YIGAL ALLON AND A REPLY BY PRIME
MINISTER MENAHEM BEGIN, THE KNESSET VOTED UNANIMOUSLY
TO REFER ALLON'S MOTION TO THE DEFENSE AND FOREIGN
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. END SUMMARY.

1. ALLON OPENED THE DEBATE AND SAID THAT "RATHER THAN
THE PRIME MINISTER HAVING SUCCEEDED IN RELEASING ISRAEL
FROM PRIOR DIALOGUE WITH THE U.S., AMERICA HAS MANAGED TO
DISSOCIATE ITSELF THEREFROM ON ITS OWN." ALLON REGARDED
THIS AS A BASIC CHANGE FOR THE WORSE. HE STRESSED
THAT THE U.S. HAS NOT CONTENTED ITSELF WITH
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PROCEDURAL CLARIFICATIONS, AND THAT ISRAEL MAY
FIND ITSELF IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION, WITH ALL
THE PARTICIPANTS--INCLUDING THE U.S. AND THE
USSR, BUT EXCEPTING ISRAEL--ARRIVING AT GENEVA
WITH PRE-COORDINATED POSITIONS.

2. THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER EMPHASIZED THAT

ISRAEL'S POSITION WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE LIST OF COMMITMENTS GIVEN TO ISRAEL WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SEPTEMBER 1, 1975 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. ALLON ALSO MENTIONED PROMISES MADE BY SECRETARY VANCE IN FEBRUARY 1977 IN CONNECTION WITH THE PALESTINIANS. HE NOTED THAT TO EVADE AN ARGUMENT (WITH THE U.S.) WILL ONLY CAUSE ITS POSTPONEMENT TO AN UNSUITABLE MOMENT.

3. ALLON WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF THE GOI'S RECENT PERFORMANCE WHICH WAS CHARACTERIZED BY "WORDS, RATHER THAN DEEDS." AS EXAMPLES, ALLON CITED THE APPROACH TO THE GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE WHICH BEGIN MADE IN HIS SPEECH OF JUNE 20, WITH THE RESULT THAT FRANCE IS NOW BECOMING MORE INVOLVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST, TO ISRAEL'S DETRIMENT; THE DECISION TO HOLD A MILITARY PARADE IN JERUSALEM NEXT YEAR; THE DECLARATION REGARDING THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON; AND THE DECISION OF AUGUST 14 ON EQUALIZING GOVERNMENT SERVICES EXTENDED TO RESIDENTS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (SEPTTEL). ALLON WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THIS DECISION WHICH, ACCORDING TO HIM, SHOULD FIRST HAVE COME BEFORE THE KNESSET DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

4. ALLON PREDICTED THAT LIKUD POLICY WOULD BRING
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ISOLATION AND NOT PEACE. A POLICY WHICH REJECTS THE JORDANIAN OPTION CAN ONLY SERVE TO STRENGTHEN THE PALESTINIAN OPTION, THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER CONCLUDED.

5. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN SAID IN HIS REPLY THAT THE PHRASES "HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIANS," "RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS" AND "NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PLO" WERE COINED ON MARCH 8, 1977--AT THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER RABIN. BEGIN REVEALED THAT THE FORMER DEFENSE AND FOREIGN MINISTERS DID NOT READ THE DOCUMENT DESCRIBING THE MEETING UNTIL FOUR WEEKS LATER. THE DOCUMENT WAS NEVER PRESENTED TO THE CABINET, FORMER PRIME MINISTER RABIN INTERVENED AND DEMANDED THAT THE DOCUMENT (FROM MARCH) NOW BE PRESENTED TO THE KNESSET DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. MR. BEGIN REPLIED THAT THAT WAS PRECISELY WHAT HE HAD IN MIND. THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD THE KNESSET THAT "WE WERE NEVER ASKED, IN WASHINGTON OR WHEN SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE WAS HERE IN JERUSALEM, TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PLO...NO ONE SPOKE TO US AS THEY DID ON

MARCH 8, 1977."

6. TURNING TO THE ALLON PLAN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IT WAS DESCRIBED BY THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION AS "TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE." HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ALIGNMENT HAS FAILED TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS, AND REJECTED THE ALLEGATION THAT IN HIS WASHINGTON TALKS ONLY PROCEDURAL ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED. "WE ALSO DISCUSSED SUBSTANCE," HE SAID.

7. THE PRIME MINISTER POINTED OUT TO THE OPPOSITION THAT "ALMOST GENERAL CONSENSUS EXISTS" ON THE FOLLOWING TWO POINTS: THERE IS AN AGREEMENT AGAINST UNCLASSIFIED

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A PALESTINIAN STATE, AND AGAINST THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PLO IN ANY FORM OF NEGOTIATIONS.

9. COMMENT: THE KNESSET CHAMBER WAS RELATIVELY FULL AND THE PUBLIC AND PRESS GALLERIES WERE CROWDED, BUT THE EXPECTED FIREWORKS DID NOT DEVELOP. FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN WAS NOT EVEN PRESENT AND THE PERFORMANCE BY BOTH ALLON AND BEGIN WAS MILD. THE ENTIRE SESSION WAS CONCLUDED IN LITTLE MORE THAN AN HOUR--IN SUM, A ROUTINE AND DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE. LEWIS

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